

JORDAN

Jordan's EduWave Reaches New Jersey

Successful efforts have been made in the U.S. state of New Jersey to integrate EduWave, a Jordanian based e-learning platform created and fully developed by the Kingdom's Integrated Technology Group (ITG), into their educational system.

EduWave, an innovative K-12 instructional and electronic learning management solution, strengthens the ability of educators, students, and administrators to harness and enhance the learning experience of the internet.

In a number of New Jersey school districts, progress has been exceptional. In the two schools of Montvale and North Arlington, all staff members and students have been registered for the Fall 2004 term to fully use the system



to their advantage. There is even an effort underway to launch a small college with the new EduWave Higher Education USA platform and offer an online in-class Masters in Education on "In 21st Century Learning" and using EduWave in the K-12 teaching practices.

The success of the program speaks for itself. In Jordan alone, EduWave serves over 3,000 schools, nearly 1.2 million students, over 50,000 teachers and

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Cabinet Reshuffle in Jordan



The government of Jordan announced the newly appointed cabinet of ministers on October 25, 2004.

The ministers staying onboard include Marwan Muasher who now assumes the posts of deputy prime minister and minister of state for prime ministry affairs and government performance. The post was created to ensure government accountability with a preliminary mandate to revamp the policy-making body's administrative structure.

Muasher is succeeded by Hani Mulki, a former minister of energy and trade and, until his new appointment, ambassador to Egypt.

Considered the second "super ministry" after that overseeing government performance, the newly created portfolio of minister of public reforms is in the hands of Ahmad Masaadeh, a lawyer and an

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Unemployment Down



A recent government survey revealed that the current unemployment rate in Jordan stands at 12.5 percent, compared to 14.5 percent last year. The 2004 Workforce and Unemployment Survey, conducted by the Department of Statistics, showed that unemployment among males stands at 11.8 percent and 16.5 percent among females.

Cabinet Reshuffle

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assistant professor of international business law at the University of Jordan. This reshuffle aims to direct the new government to accelerate its planned political and economic development and increase its efficiency by revamping and reforming the public sector.

Jordan's Prime Minister Faisal el-Fayez said the new government will focus its efforts on administrative reform in order to follow through on the King's directives for social, political and economic enhancement. The goal behind administrative reforms is to improve services offered to citizens and to re-examine domestic policies to reflect more positively on the lives of Jordanians.

October 2004 Cabinet:

Prime Minister and Defence Minister: *Faisal Fayez*; Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs and Government Performance: *Marwan Muasher*; Minister of Foreign Affairs: *Hani Mulki*; Minister of Planning and International Cooperation: *Bassem Awadallah*; Minister of Justice: *Salah Bashir*; Minister of Interior: *Samir Habashneh*; Minister of Education: *Khalid Touqan*; Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs: *Ahmad Hilayel*; Minister of Water and Irrigation: *Hazem Nasser*; Minister of Finance: *Mohammad Abu Hammour*; Minister of Labour: *Amjad Majali*; Minister of Tourism and Antiquities: *Alia Hattough-Bouran*; Minister of Energy and Mineral

Ajloun Nature Reserve to Help Foster Sustainable Community Development

Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah recently inaugurated the Ajloun Nature Reserve, a project that makes environmental protection a means for building sustainable community development in the impoverished northern governorate.



The pioneer eco-tourism project was launched by collective efforts from the Jordan River Foundation (JRF) and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), as a first step to promote eco-tourism in Ajloun, making forestry and tourism main employers for the local inhabitants of the area.

The initiative should encourage similar projects throughout the country, building a corporate identity for each governorate and its traditional products, and developing eco-tourism activities as a means of supporting conservation programs and providing job opportunities for the local community.

With a total budget of nearly JD200,000 donated by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation in cooperation with "RESCATE" and the Japanese embassy, the Ajloun Reserve is located in 12,000 dunums of forest. It has more than 200 plant species, 30 medicinal plant species, eight scavenger species and 40 species of birds. Enjoying the highest rainfall rate in Jordan, Ajloun is a haven of

rolling hills covered by dense woodlands of evergreen oak and scattered pistachio, carob and wild strawberry trees. Rich in natural, agricultural and human resources and known for its revered historic and religious significance, Ajloun promises great tourism potential.

The RSCN and the JRF are highlighting Ajloun's richness in agricultural and human resources and its historic and religious significance in an effort to market it as a tourist spot. Recently, the government subsidized a travel package, "Ajloun Summer," to encourage domestic tourism. Visitors paid JD8 for an overnight stay in a two-star hotel, two-way transportation, three meals, a tour of the area and a visit to the main tourism attraction, Al Rabad Castle. ☞

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Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
www.rscn.org.jo

Resources: *Azmi Khreisat*; Minister of Social Development: *Riyad Abu Karaki*; Minister of Public Works and Housing: *Raed Abu Saud*; Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research: *Issam Zabalawi*; Minister of Municipal Affairs: *Amal Farhan*; Minister of Culture and Government Spokesperson: *Asma Khader*; Minister of Health: *Saeed Darwazeh*; Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs: *Nayef Hadid*; Minister of Industry and Trade: *Ahmad Hindawi*; Minister of Environment: *Yousef Shureiqi*; Minister of Information and Communications Technology: *Nadia Saeed*; Minister of State for Legal Affairs: *Fahd Abul Athem Ensour*; Minister of Transport: *Soud Nsairat*; Minister of Political Development: *Munther Shara*; Minister of State for Public Reforms: *Ahmad Masaadeh*; Minister of Agriculture: *Sharari Shakhanbeh*. ☞

FDA Delegation Visit Moves Forward with Bilateral Cooperation

This past summer saw the visit of a delegation from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to Jordan as part of the ongoing collaboration between HHS and the Jordanian Ministry of Health (MOH) beginning in May 2003 with a commitment made between HHS Secretary Tommy G. Thompson and His Excellency Saeed Darwazeh, Minister of MOH. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) undertook a program of technical assistance to the Jordanian Food and Drug Administration in the form of a series of videoconferences leading to the delegation visit during the week of August 27 - September 3, 2004.

The delegation held a series of meetings with a range of ministers. The delegation contributed recommendations for

further collaboration that will enable JFDA to build its regulatory capacity, which together with promoting public health and patient safety is at the core of Dr. Salah Mawajdeh's vision for JFDA. JFDA requested training in all areas of inspection and regulation in order to improve the quality of its human capital.

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Jordan takes 34th Rank on WEF's Global Competitiveness Report

Jordan ranked 34th among 104 countries surveyed in the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2004-2005. Jordan's Growth Competitiveness Index ranking regressed from 34th place in 2003, due to the addition of three new surveyed countries in the index.

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), the growth competitiveness index, which assesses the public and private sector




global competitiveness, is composed of three component indexes: The technology index, the public institutions index and the macroeconomic environment index, which are calculated on the basis of both "hard data" or statistics, and "survey data".

On the other hand, Jordan's business competitiveness rank reached 43rd during 2004, in comparison to 40th in 2003, indicating that it has the third most competitive business climate in the Arab world. 

Development Projects Unfold in Ma'an

A recent study on civil society and youth development in the Governorate of Ma'an shows that 3.8% of youth in the southern city of the kingdom are members in civil society institutions and 1.3% join political parties. The study was conducted by four Jordanian Al-Hussein University students, who met with His Majesty King Abdullah II to discuss these findings.

The report entitled: "The Challenges and the Opportunities" is testimony to the importance of involving youth in the social and economic development of the country. The report made various recommendations highlighting the need for youth to assume a leading role in developing their areas through the creation of a youth body, with a focus on women's development programs. Another area of concern that the report emphasized was the need for more training and rehabilitation courses to enhance the youth's computer skills.

On a different front, the Jordanian Ministry of Environment recently created a new office in Ma'an. The office aims to implement a number of programs in addition to short-term and long-term strategies designed to conserve the environment and to maintain environmental sustainability to enhance Ma'an's socio-economic conditions. 



UPCOMING EVENTS in JORDAN 2004

December 1 - 2, 2004

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American Jordanian Expo

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Regional and International
Market Penetration"*

For more information:

Tel. (962) 6 5681762

Fax. (962) 6 5683439

e-mail: AJEX@jaba.org.jo

www.ajex.org

December 6 - 8, 2004

IJIS 2004

Iraqi - Jordanian
Investment Symposium

For more information:

www.ijis2004.com

Did you know that...



...Jordan's surface area is comparable to the State of Indiana in the United States?

...Lawrence of Arabia (1962), Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (1989), and The Mummy Returns (2001) were all filmed in Jordan?



...500 public schools in Jordan that include about 173,000 students have been computerized, resulting in the ratio of students to personal computers improving from 42 to 21 (2004)?



A Plea for "Exciting" Coexistence

By Sue Stanton*

What exactly are we talking about when we use the term 'exist'? If you look in any thesaurus, you will find the terms for existing to be rather dull and uninspiring. Words like 'be present, live, attend,' all are represented and make the word 'exist' seem as if it is something to be endured, void of any spark, a rather bland thing and definitely unexciting.



So one would assume that adding the letters c and o to the word 'exist' might just place a little excitement into its rather boring definition but in effect, the word 'coexist' ends up meaning that two or more entities now 'exist' alongside one another, both have endurance as a common denominator and with that endurance, a rather dull and unexciting fate.

But as we all know in the history of religion, to peacefully coexist has been anything but dull and unexciting!


So what went wrong in the field of religious beliefs? Or better yet, why has religion become the catalyst for such a woefully lacking definition to a word that means in reality almost the exact opposite?

The mission of the Jordanian Interfaith Coexistence Research Center (JICRC) has taken on the formidable task of seeking answers to such a definition so horribly and many times, tragically gone wrong. Inspired by the 9/11 attacks in the United States and more recently bolstered by the 3/11 attacks in Madrid, Spain and

worldwide, the Board of this organization has committed itself to dialogue, research and education among the religions of the Middle East region in an attempt to facilitate a meaningful return to a much quieter and calmer definition of the word 'exist'.

The JICRC is dedicated to the exploring those common values in every religion, but especially the Abrahamic faiths, so that one day we can joyfully express our shared religious values and feel safe in doing so. We can allow them to inspire us and civilize us to the best that they have to offer and for the greater good of the community.

And when we hear the word 'exist', we can openly say that peaceful coexistence between religions is not a pie in the sky attitude, and not a boring day to day existence, but a reality in our hearts and homes in the shared company of good neighbors.

**Jordanian Interfaith Coexistence
Research Center (JICRC) Program
Coordinator in USA* 

Ambassador Gnehm launches Cultural Series

On Tuesday, October 26th, the Embassy of Jordan's Cultural Series was launched by former U.S. Ambassador to Jordan, Mr. Edward Gnehm. He spoke under the theme "Jordan and America-Building For Tomorrow". Ambassador Gnehm recounted his experiences in Jordan and discussed the future that lies ahead between Jordan and the United States. He also spoke of Jordan's perseverance and persistence in their effort to build a better tomorrow.

“Education and exchanges are other areas where Jordan and the US work together to build a better tomorrow.”



“Education and exchanges are other areas where Jordan and the US work together to build a better tomorrow,” Ambassador Gnehm stated. “American companies are active

in new distant learning programs. American universities are pursuing academic relationships with Jordanian universities.” In reference to the dynamic Fulbright program between the two countries he remarked, “Such an exchange is, in my opinion, critical not only for education but also for building a common understanding.”

“Building a better tomorrow means dealing forthrightly with political and security issues,” the former ambassador to Jordan proclaimed. He noted Jordan's steadfastness in confronting terror. “I

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Jordanian Fulbright Administrators Visit Embassy

The Embassy of Jordan hosted a group of Jordanian school administrators participating in the Fulbright Teacher and Administrator Exchange Program. The group includes nine school administrators and teachers from across the Kingdom.

The Jordanian principals spent twelve days in Washington, DC, visiting different types of schools and educational organizations. Each of the Jordanian participants spent a week in another part of the United States. The program aims to introduce the Jordanian participants to the educational administration in the US at various school levels through the process of observation and work-shadowing of American school administrators.


The group of school administrators and teachers visited the embassy and met with Ambassador Karim Kwar. Each administrator shared their

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Jordan's Eduwave
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>>> www.itgsolutions.com

some 5,000 administrators. The Jordanian government has made the system its core national e-learning platform. EduWave at the forefront of e-learning market in the Middle East and several countries are moving towards adopting national e-learning initiatives.

Education has always been a priority for Jordan. The need to enhance the learning capabilities and educational systems of students is essential in order to prepare Jordanians with the skills to compete not only in the domestic but global markets as well. As a result of the acknowledgement of this high priority, EduWave is meeting this need. This is only the beginning in the expansion and improvements in the educational systems. In the future, we can expect to see more examples, such as the state of New Jersey, implement similar educational innovations. 



Feature: Jordanian - American Success Stories

Mohammed Abu Zaid: How to Transfer Yalla!Technologies to Jordan

After eleven years of living outside of Jordan, Mohammed has found ways to give back to the country that generously invested in his future. He recently founded Yalla! Technologies (<http://www.yallatech.com>), an IT firm dedicated to transferring much needed knowledge and technology from the US and Canada to Jordan and the Middle East. Yalla! Technologies



will leverage his academic and technical skills and will allow him to contribute to the growth and success of the Jordanian IT industry.

At Yalla! Technologies, Mohammed will research and evaluate compelling IT solutions and will work on successfully introducing them to Jordan and the Middle East. Moreover, Yalla! Technologies will work closely with selected Jordanian firms in order to provide them with an entry point into US markets. Finally, Yalla! Technologies will benefit Jordanians through its software and E-business development arm.

In 2002, Muhammed obtained a Masters degree in Information Technology with a concentration in Software Engineering from Harvard University. He has resided in the Boston area for over six years. He

is currently a group leader and a senior software engineer at PTC, a leading provider of mechanical design and manufacturing software solutions.

In his free time, Mohammed volunteers with the Network of Arab Professionals (<http://www.naaponline.org>). NAAP provides its members with professional advancement and networking opportunities, along with organizing a number of other social and civic empowerment activities.

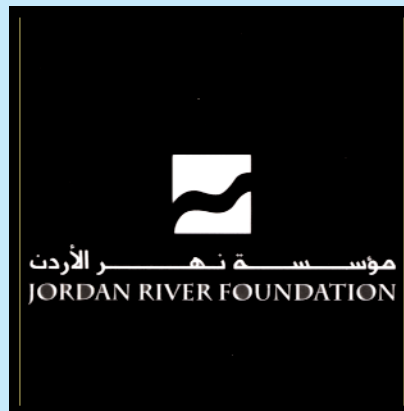
Mohammed Abu Zaid can be reached at mabuzaid@yallatech.com ☞

Jordan River Foundation Empowers Society

The Jordan River Foundation (JRF), established in 1995 and chaired by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah, is a Jordanian non-profit, non-governmental organization. JRF's vision is to empower society, especially women and children, and in turn, improve the quality of life to secure a better future for all Jordanians. At the outset, the Foundation initiated socio-economic projects for women to provide employment opportunities that enhanced their livelihood while developing their knowledge and skills in handicraft production and entrepreneurship. These projects benefited thousands of individuals, directly and indirectly, and continue to generate income for vulnerable communities and families.

As the Foundation matured and the context of development evolved in Jordan, the Foundation expanded its approach to one of sustainable community investments, integrating and serving community development needs. Today, the

Foundation is recognized nationally, regionally and internationally as an agent for positive change and as a leading Jordanian institution contributing to the social and economic well-being of citizens. Their activities have become models for emulation receiving accolades by the beneficiaries, who are the success stories. ☞



www.jordanriver.jo



First Space Project in Jordan

Jordan has been selected to host the region's first permanent space project, including a scientific entertainment complex and a space training center to train future Jordanian astronauts.

The complex, to be built on a 400-dunum site on the Airport Road, is expected to take four years to complete. The first stage, scheduled to be complete within 14 months, will feature a space museum displaying a model of the Soyuz station (the longest serving manned spacecraft in the world), in addition to space equipment. The second stage will take two years, overlapping with the first phase, and include a space adventure park. ☞

Feature: Jordanian - American Success Stories

Sara Mraish: To Bridge the Cultural Gap Between the US and the Middle East through Globalization Services

As president and founder of Zanzitek, LLC, she has achieved excellence in the field of multilingual technology and linguistic consulting for the Arabic Language, as well as custom software development to Fortune 500 companies. Sara founded Zanzitek in 2002 to bridge the cultural gap between the US and the Middle East through globalization services. Sara has assembled a team of skilled engineers, linguists, cultural consultants, strategy consultants, and operations experts who work seamlessly together to deliver one integrated, well-rounded solution to meet all their clients' diverse needs. Sara's knowledge of the American and Middle Eastern business cultures has made Zanzitek a one-stop shop for American companies looking to succeed in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as for Middle Eastern companies look-

ing to enter the US market. Recent clients include Lucent, HP, Basis Technology, BBN, and G & P Management Group.

In the midst of her demanding professional life Sara finds time to volunteer with Arab-American organizations, drawing upon her personal experience and cultural understanding of the Middle East in order to strengthen the Arab voice in America. In her own words,

"Although I live in Boston, I am very proud of my birth country Jordan...I started Zanzitek to bridge the economic gap between Jordan and the US. I often contract my projects to Jordanian companies and individuals because my personal goal is to share the knowledge and experiences that I gain here in the US to businesswomen or women who want to enter the entrepreneurial area in Jordan.

Jordanian-American, Sara Mraish, graduated with honors from Framingham State College, Massachusetts, with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and French. She later received her IT Certificate from


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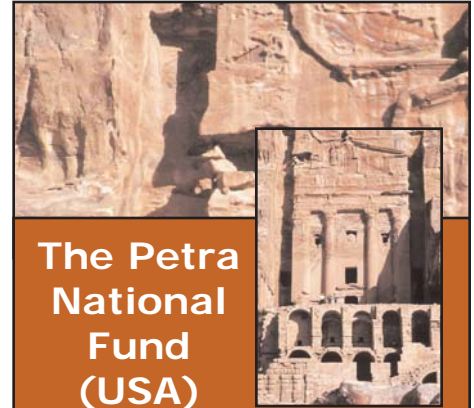
Ambassador Gnehm from page 7

told every visitor to the embassy and every audience that I spoke to that I never once had to convince a Jordanian that we needed to confront terrorism. Jordan has been a victim of terrorism many times in its history."

In his closing remarks, Ambassador Gnehm asserted his gratitude towards the country. "I love the country. I love the people." As for his vision for both countries, "Jordan and the United State have faced many challenges together in the past. We will face many challenges in the future. Together we will meet them boldly. Together we will build that better tomorrow."

Jordanian Fulbright from page 7

and experiences with the Ambassador, and emphasized the importance of such educational and cultural programs between Jordan and the United States. They also discussed the importance of introducing technology in the educational system and improving the teaching methodology accordingly. 



The Petra National Fund (USA)

For the first time, American tax payers can now make tax-deductible contributions to the only organization in the United States devoted to the protection, preservation and presentation to the public of the ancient city of Petra in southern Jordan.


The Petra National Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation established in 2003 and launched in April 2004 at the time of the opening of the "Petra: Lost City of Stone" exhibit at the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The Foundation (PNF) exists to support efforts to preserve the archeological and cultural heritage and the natural environment of this World Heritage site and to promote greater understanding in the United States of the importance of this ancient city.

The World Monument Fund has included Petra on its annual "World Monument Watch List of 100 Most Endangered Sites" in three of the last six years.

For more Information:


The Petra National Fund (USA)
Suite 900,
1100 Connecticut Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20036-4144
Fax 202-293-7907

FDA Delegation
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The delegation pledged to explore potential resources within HHS that will help JFDA to develop a training program to this end. The delegation and JFDA together articulated a basic strategic approach to the design and implementation of a training program that will take shape with continued cooperation including inspections by HHS in Jordan and workshops to be held in Jordan on the technical elements of the drug approval system in the United States. 



Sara Mraish
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Northeastern University.
“I believe strongly that we can’t compete in this 21st century without having expatriate Jordanians and those back home helping each other. With the knowledge transfer to build a stronger economy, and the teamwork that creates an encouraging support system, we can make it. Finally, we need to give back to our community as our community gives us; volunteering and the art of doing so is a great resource to build a healthy society.” 

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JORDANinFIGURES

Challenging Figures: According to a recent survey conducted by Jordan’s Department of Statistics (DoS), 37.2 percent of the country’s citizens are below 15 years of age, while 56.6 percent are aged between 15-59 years. Citizens aged over 60 represented only around 6 percent of the total.

Winning Figures: According to the Central Bank of Jordan’s (CBJ) monthly statistical bulletin, assets of local Jordanian banks have increased to JD16.2 billion by the end of last June, a rise of 6.5 percent compared to the same period of 2003 (Amman Stock Exchange).



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